

Author running head: Parvati Raghuram, Pat Noxolo and Clare Madge
Short title running head: Rising Asia and postcolonial geography

Rising Asia and postcolonial geography: A view through the indeterminacy of postcolonial theory

Parvati Raghuram,¹ Pat Noxolo² and Clare Madge³

¹Department of Geography, Open University, Milton Keynes, UK

²Department of Geography, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield, UK

³Department of Geography, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK

Correspondence: Parvati Raghuram (email: parvati.raghuram@open.ac.uk)

There has been much discussion recently about the future of postcolonial theory. Some suggest that it is on the wane, while others defend its continued capacity for transformative critique. This paper contributes to these debates by considering postcolonial geography's future through the prism of 'Rising Asia'. Rising Asia presents challenges to the spatial matrices underpinning current thinking in postcolonial geography, particularly the global South/North distinction and the histories of colonialism. What is the constituency of, and the emerging collectivities around, Rising Asia? What are the tensions between past, present and future in thinking about Rising Asia? We route our response to these questions by conceptualizing postcolonial geography as a disciplinary performance that draws on its subdisciplines. The argument is developed through three conceptual hooks – field, constituency and temporality – drawn from a reading of Edward Said's works *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1975) and *On Late Style: Music and Literature against the Grain* (2007). Ultimately we do not seek to set an agenda for postcolonial geography; instead we suggest that greater attentiveness to the indeterminacies of postcolonial theory as it passes into postcolonial geography might allow more generative responses to the questions posed by Rising Asia.

Keywords: indeterminacies, postcolonial futures, postcolonial geography, rising Asia, Edward Said, temporalities

Introduction

In the past decade postcolonialism and its histories, presences and futures have become the subject of much intellectual debate. Some suggest that postcolonial theory is already on the wane (Bayart, 2011), while others defend the continued capacity of its transformative critiques to engage issues into the future (Young, 2012). Its relevance is questioned both on foundational principles such as its encouragement of particularistic thinking (Chibber, 2013) and issues around its dissipation into wider disciplinary formations. This special issue aims to explore the future of postcolonial geography within this context of a wider retrospective about the future of postcolonial theory. It is thus the first foray into a recasting of 'the postcolonial' in contemporary geography.

However, there are other more empirical challenges to postcolonial theory too. One such issue is the global rebalancing that has arguably occurred in the last two decades as many countries of the global South – particularly some of the big Asian economies of China, India and Indonesia, sometimes called 'Rising Asia'¹ – have witnessed high economic growth rates. Although the rates of growth were highest in smaller countries like Singapore and Qatar, it is growth in the large economies like China, India, Brazil, Russia and South Africa which is helping to rebalance global consumption and hence the global economy (World Bank, 2011; UNDP, 2013). Growth in these countries is contrasted with slow and sluggish economic performance in much of the global North (European Commission, 2009; Sidaway, 2012). The economic significance of Rising Asia has also led to greater political influence for some of these nations (Wang, 2008; Stephen, 2012). It has, in addition, meant that an increasing amount of trade no longer goes through the US or Europe; these countries are bypassed in South-South trade and political relations (World Bank, 2011). The North-South relations that underlay much postcolonial thinking in Geography have been supplemented by a much more complex and variegated spatial matrix of power relations.

This is not the first time that Asian economic growth has been seen as newsworthy. Through the late 1970s and 1980s many Asian countries, particularly Japan, but also what came to be known as the four Asian tigers – Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea – had faster than average growth. The contrast, then too, was with the economic problems of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries against which background the Asian growth looked like a miracle (World Bank, 1993). However, after the Asian economic crisis of 1997–98, which affected some countries (e.g. Philippines, Malaysia, South Korea) more than others (e.g. Singapore), there was considerable reflection on whether this growth was indeed a miracle and what could be learnt from that period (Rigg, 2002). This contemplation resulted in the retreat of cultural values such as Confucianism as an explanation for growth and recognition of the continued, albeit muted, participation of the state in the economy in what came to be known as the era of the post-Washington consensus.

However, in the contemporary period the impact of Rising Asia extends well beyond Asia. Through development co-operation, investment and expansion of strategic interests, the power of these Asian countries goes further than their borders. Most noted is the increasing investment in Africa (Mohan & Power, 2009) but this is not the only area of significance – the effect on other parts of the world too is growing (Basrur, 2010; Tellis *et al.*, 2011). Economic growth has also translated into some degree of increased political significance (Florini, 2011) with greater participation and presence in international forums such as the G20.

Arguably, as powerful as the global economic changes heralded by terms such as Rising Asia is the discursive authority of Rising Asia in the contemporary moment. This discursive power often gets past the dominance and instability of the economic figures of growth (which underlie the phenomenon of Rising Asia) as it explores both the political and the longer-term legacies of economic growth. Most strongly seen in analyses of China in what Callahan (2012) calls 'Sino-speak', it is marked by neo-orientalism and exceptionalism i.e. some sense of the uniqueness of China (Ramo, 2004), and how it is to become the new centre of the world. More modest claims about India's growing supremacy too abound (Das, 2006; Basrur, 2010). What is clear is that irrespective of the accuracy of some of the claims made in these discourses, there has been some change in Asia – economically, politically and discursively – which goes beyond the continent and is altering Asia's global significance (Callahan, 2012).

This altered global presence of Asia presents challenges to the spatial matrices underlying current thinking in postcolonial geography. For instance, although it retains an anti-colonial and anti-hegemonic flavour, the vectors of power that are analysed in postcolonial geography have often drawn unequally from development geographies and hence, have prioritized the global South/North distinction, albeit in quite complex ways. The contemporary moment raises questions about such versions of postcolonial geography. The dynamism and diversity of the global South, especially its manifestation in what has come to be known as Rising Asia, ruffles commonly accepted spatialities underlying postcolonial geographies and offers interesting new ways of thinking. In this paper we have therefore used the prism of Rising Asia to raise questions about the future of postcolonial geography. Arguably Asia's contemporary centrality in the global economy effectively alters the inherited spatialities of European colonialism, which often formed a basis of postcolonial geographic thought. For example, at the time of European colonialism, Asia came to be defined as that which was not Europe (the centre of civilization); it was a residual category (Said, 1978). However, this discourse of Asia was also reclaimed by writers like Rabindranath Tagore and Sun Yatsen in the early twentieth century to build a sense of commonality (Korhonen, 2008). A century later these contestations over versions and visions of Asia continue. In this paper we use postcolonial theory to think about Rising Asia in the contemporary moment and to explore the productive challenges and generative possibilities Rising Asia provides for thinking about the future of postcolonial geography.

The paper is divided into five sections. Section one contextualizes the arguments in this paper by outlining wider debates on the future of postcolonial theory and setting out our thinking about postcolonial geography within this context. We then use Rising Asia as the specific issue through which to route our thoughts on postcolonial geography's future. For the sake of simplicity and consistency we adopt three conceptual hooks throughout this paper – field, constituency and temporality – forming the basis of the following three sections. These concepts are drawn out of a reading of Edward Said's works that are less often studied in *Geography: Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1975) and *On Late Style: Music and Literature against the Grain* (2007). Separated in their publication dates by 30 years, the former can be seen as Said's early work, while the latter is Said's final book of essays, which was compiled and edited after his death in 2003. We use these two books to reflect on the affordances that some of Said's ideas offer in thinking about postcolonial geography and Rising Asia as field (section two), constituency (section three) and temporality (section four). These sections illustrate that postcolonial theory is not necessarily fully determined by the particularities of European colonialism, but is instead better conceived as a set of indeterminate elements with a continued political commitment (anti-colonial, anti-hegemonic). The indeterminacy of postcolonial theory as it passes into postcolonial geography means that the discourse of Rising Asia can itself be questioned and that in this process Rising Asia as a discourse can be reimagined as an iterative and unpredictably expanding disciplinary performance. The paper ends with a brief conclusion in section five.

Revisiting postcolonial geography now

The current period appears to be a moment for retrospectives about postcolonial theory, with a series of papers exploring postcolonial theory and its inheritances and futures for a range of disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities. Examples include a special issue 'After Europe' edited by Sanjay Seth (2011) in *Postcolonial Studies* (which includes a retrospect of Dipesh Chakrabarty's seminal book *Provincialising Europe*), Partha Chatterjee's (2012) paper 'After Subaltern Studies' in the journal *Economic and Political Weekly* and a special issue of *New Literary History* 'The state of postcolonial studies' (see Chakrabarty, 2012; Quayson, 2012). Topical themes flourish such as, for instance, the Oecumenne project 'Citizenship after Orientalism' and the special issue arising from their work in the journal *Citizenship Studies* (Isin, 2012). In another vein, there is a range of publications examining the possibilities and insights that postcolonial thinking has to offer specific disciplines. This includes familiar critiques of Eurocentrism and the possibilities it offers for particular disciplines (Alina, 2012) and methodological thinking (Robinson, 2011). In a sense then, geography's reflection on its engagement with postcolonial studies is part of a wider moment of reflection on the inheritances and opportunities offered by postcolonial theory for academic ideas and practices.

Interestingly, we see in this transdisciplinary moment of reassessment, a convergence of death and rebirth for postcolonial perspectives: grave pronouncements of and defences against the death or irrelevance of postcolonial theory (Bayart, 2011; Young 2012) stand alongside interrogations of the rebirth or expansion of postcolonial perspectives into new spatial and disciplinary arenas (Mbembe, 2011; Stoler, 2011; Alina, 2012). Of course, this is not the first time that postcolonial theory has been reassessed in this way: Stam and Shohat (2012: 371) marvel at postcolonial theory's jujitsu-like capacity to transform critique into renewal. Despite, for example, repeated criticisms of its inability to respond to contemporary issues, of the limited constituency of voices that it represents (Dirlik, 1994), and of the seemingly stubborn temporality of the 'post' that cannot see continued oppressions (Shohat, 1992), 'the postcolonial remains' (Young, 2012: 20). Why? We argue that the staying power of postcolonial theory derives not from its ability to fight back (with counter-critique) or constantly reapply itself, but from the permeability of its boundaries. So the response to the need to take on contemporary issues is that postcolonial theory was always already and remains available for consideration of those issues (Stam & Shohat, 2012); the response to accusations of a limited constituency is that postcolonial theory always was open to a range of voices (Ning, 2005), and always recognized that its publics could not be fully known or represented in their diversity (Fanon, 2001); the response to the fixity of its 'post' is that the post never fixed colonialism in the past (Hall, 1996), and that the past was always summoned within postcolonial theory as a means of understanding the present (Stoler, 2011). In other words, in terms of its field of study, its constituency and its temporality, postcolonial theory remains because it is open: it cannot be fully determined, owned or set out. Below we expand on these three ideas in more depth.

There have been several attempts to characterize and summarize postcolonial geography as a fully formed subdiscipline, as being a bounded, concretized *field* of study. For some, postcolonial geography can be understood as having a dual focus: on colonial discourse and how it can be read as the west representing the rest of the world to itself; and on the continuing legacy of the colonial past in contemporary power structures and spatial formations (e.g. Slater, 2004; Sharp & Briggs, 2006; Gilmartin & Berg, 2007). For others, the specificity of the subdiscipline is conditioned by its links with the larger interdisciplinary movement of postcolonial theory, utilizing the ideas of a relatively narrow range of key theorists, mainly from literary studies such as Spivak, Bhabha and Said. As part of this narrative, geographers welcomed postcolonial theory as a means of challenging the colonial roots of the discipline (Blunt & McEwan, 2002), and as a means of simultaneously reinscribing both relationality and difference/inequality into global spatial relationships problematizing both the continued salience of national collectivities and the premature celebration of a frictionless globalization (Sidaway, 2000; Robinson, 2003; Radcliffe, 2005).

However, here we are not attempting a comprehensive review of postcolonial geography as a field. Instead, we emphasize that the connections between geographers and

postcolonial theories are multifarious, complex and always evolving. Our commitment to the indeterminate nature of the field of postcolonial geography comes from our reading of Said's (1975) *Beginnings: Intention and Method*. Here Said (1975) analyses the role of the literary theorist in relation to the literary text, at a historical moment where she/he has much less licence to analyse the text in terms of its literary ancestry (a discourse of origins), and is more likely to understand the text in terms of what Said calls its 'adjacencies', the unpredictable intertextualities that arise from simultaneous context. Said argues that (1975: 71) 'A literary critic, for example, who is fastened on a text is a critic who, in demonstrating his [sic] right to speak, makes the text something that is continuous with his [sic] own discourse...'. Of interest here is the focus on the transition from context to context, as each writer authorizes her/himself to reframe concepts in different contexts. This authorization to rewrite means that postcolonial geography must be seen as a contingent, post hoc formation (rather than a fixed set of ideas and perspectives). It arises from a historically specific set of material and intellectual circumstances, and is subject to unpredictable change in the future.

In *On Late Style*, Said appreciates how the transition from text to text is not simply a transference, but a creative move. He focuses on the Canadian pianist, Glenn Gould, showing how Gould works through repetition of each piece, take after take in the recording studio, performance after performance in the concert hall, to reveal 'composition as an activity still being undertaken in its performance' (2007: 133). In terms of Geography, we can see the unpredictable movement of postcolonial geography as continued invention within disciplinary transfer. The future of postcolonial geography is therefore determined by the rhythms and conditions of its subdisciplines.

This indeterminacy of postcolonial geography as a field is clear when we understand postcolonial geography as a network of relationships between a wide range of different subdisciplines. Subdisciplines like development geography (Kothari, 2002; Robinson, 2003; Sidaway *et al.*, 2003; Sharp, 2009) have incorporated postcolonial theory as a named intervention into their fields and have explored its implications for their subdisciplines, and for substantive Geography at a range of different historical moments. They take their pace from the subdiscipline, rather than from interdisciplinary trends, undisciplined and unpredictable in its contexts and effects.

Just as there is no readily identifiable field of postcolonial geography, postcolonial theory teaches us that the *constituency* of postcolonial geography should also be difficult to compose, not because it does not have a constituency, but because that constituency is almost completely indeterminable. In *Beginnings* (1975: 75) Said takes the unknowability of the constituency that is *summoned* by postcolonial theory as a starting point, and therefore understands theory as inevitably speculative and subject to error:

Because we must deal with the unknown, whose nature is by definition speculative and outside the flowing chain of language, whatever we make of it will be no more than probability and no less than error. The awareness of possible error in speculation and of a continued speculation regardless of error is an event in the history of modern rationalism...

This acceptance of the ever-present possibility of error pushes towards a politics of radical and open provisionality. Far from a constituency that could be readily identified by *prima facie* characteristics (such as the global poor or the global South), the constituency of postcolonial geography shifts and morphs as events, relationships, funding agendas, intellectual trends and technologies change. As such, postcolonial geography should not be considered as having a ready-made constituency that can be called or interpellated: as academics we must assume that we would not recognize it if we saw it and do not know where to look for it, so we have to wait for it to reveal itself, and be ready to see it when it does. This is a view of 'the people' that Fanon (2001) recognized as impossible for the postcolonial intellectual to represent in the immediate aftermath of colonialism, as 'occult', unknowable in its historical dynamism. Half a century later, questioning who 'we' are, Spivak (2003: 26) writes of the 'formation of collectivities without necessarily prefabricated content'.

Thus, as part of the wider interdisciplinary movement of postcolonial studies, postcolonial geography can be understood as a form of radical space clearing for a more inclusive academic and political practice, in which room is made for radical difference. In these terms, it is the calling with humility of a much wider and more indeterminate constituency – no necessary confines can be put on the type of space that such a constituency might require, and there is no vanguard to command this constituency and make it advance in particular directions (Spivak, 1994). This is a constituency that cannot be interpellated with epistemic violence (as if to say 'here is the space in which you must fit and you must stay within it'): 'the residual and emergent must make their way in the dominant' (Spivak, 1999: 330). The implication of this for postcolonial geography is that the subdiscipline needs to remain reflexively observational and dialogic in relation to its real constituency, the radically different of indefinable possibility.

This indeterminacy of those who are summoned has implications for the constituency of those who *make* theory, who may themselves be summoned, not through academic education or even through shared political goals, but by affective attachments that are unpredictable and may indeed be subject to change. In *Of Late Style* Said (2007) reflects on the work and politics of Jean Genet, the French novelist and dramatist, who was very active in various twentieth-century political struggles, including a longstanding interest in Palestine. Said suggests that Genet's commitment to the Palestinian cause was founded on a love for the people that transcended the cause itself. Said argues that when a struggle reaches its fruition, a love such

as Genet's can find itself rejected as unsuited to the pragmatics of political outcomes – as Said (2007: 81) puts it:

what revolutions in course never admit [is] that their first great enemies - and victims – after they triumph are likely to be the artists and intellectuals who supported the revolution for love and not because of the accidents of nationality, or the likelihood of success, or the dictates of theory.

Postcolonial theory's openness to affective attachment means that the writing constituency of postcolonial geography may be hard to completely predict or determine, both in terms of *who* will form that attachment and in terms of *how* that attachment will be formed.

Finally, postcolonial theory has offered a strong historical analysis in order to move into the future with a dynamic present. Postcolonial *temporalities* (with their deferred 'post', see Adam & Tiffin, 1990; Hall, 1996) can be understood as balanced on the tension between unfinished pasts and unstable presents, rather than advancing definitively from a finished past to a pristine future. In *Beginnings*, Said (1975) identifies processes of authorization in starting and restarting (and huge ambivalence in relation to the continuity of traditions in these restarts). In *On Late Style* Said (2007: 14) also identifies a sense that 'lateness is being at the end, fully conscious, full of memory, and also very (even preternaturally) aware of the present'. So beginnings are about relationships with the past and intentions in the present, while lateness is not about death or the (near) future end, but are focused on memory of the past and its effect on the present. As Said (2007: 7) identifies features of late style, he notices that some people face their end with resolution, but he is only interested in those whose work reveals 'a nonharmonious, nonserene tension... a sort of deliberately unproductive productiveness...' He questions what holds this tension together, or stops it breaking apart into different epochs. Perhaps the question for postcolonial geography is whether the conditions for such a generative tension will remain in place in the future?

One can imagine an originary point for the generative tension of postcolonial theory in the post-war independence moments of the 1960s onwards. At that point new national governments perhaps thought in terms of optimistic fresh starts (Said 1975: 48): 'What is really anterior to a search for a method, to a search for a temporal beginning, is not merely an initiative, but a necessary certainty, a genetic optimism, that continuity is possible as intended by the act of beginning.' However, as theory, the postcolonial is not optimistic but concrete: it 'writes from the perspective of long experience rather than revolutionary beginnings' (Said, 2007: 19). In so doing, postcolonial theory recognizes a tension that Said picks up in his work. That is, the tension between the attempt to create conceptual order through a new beginning in the middle of the often brutal disorder of reality: 'A beginning gives us the chance to do work

that compensates us for the tumbling disorder of brute reality that will not settle down' (Said, 1975: 50).

The value of postcolonial geography, then, is as a cross-disciplinary irritant within Geography, i.e. as a refusal to jump past the present into an ordered and clearly conceivable future, or, in other words, a refusal to try to drag the troublesome present behind it into a heroic future (Spivak, 1994). Holding (not resolving) this tension between past, present and future and between the old and the new and how they are produced in periodization is implicit in terms such as 'rising' and 'postcolonial'.

Having used a reading of Said's texts in terms of field, constituency and temporalities to argue for a recognition of the indeterminacy of postcolonial geography, we now go on to use these three terms as conceptual 'hooks' to think about Rising Asia in the contemporary moment and to explore what productive challenges and generative possibilities Rising Asia provides for thinking about the future of postcolonial geography. These revolve around the field of geographical study (i.e. altered spatial imaginaries including a challenge to relationalities such as centre/periphery), the constituency of postcolonial geography (i.e. the collectivities and differences that postcolonial geography summons) and the temporalities of postcolonial geography (its sense of the immanence and continuing overriding potency of European colonialism). However, the indeterminacy of postcolonial geography (as noted above) also means that the discourse of Rising Asia itself also constantly morphs and changes; it is an iterative and unpredictably expanding disciplinary performance. We therefore unsettle Rising Asia as a fully formed empirical phenomenon by exploring its transformations as it moves through different fields, garners different constituencies and holds together different temporalities. In other words, in the following three sections we not only explore how Rising Asia raises questions for postcolonial geography, but also reiteratively consider how indeterminacy arising from our reading of postcolonial geography raises questions about the notion of Rising Asia itself.

Field

The *field of Rising Asia* has largely been driven by narratives of economic growth in particular countries. The spatialities of these discussions usually focus around the nation with the economies of these countries becoming defined and knowable through the production of standardized economic indicators. As Kaur and Wahlberg (2012) argue, this means that the economies of countries are harmonized and made comparable through classification of nations in economic growth tables. They are also commoditized by assigning the 'Chinese' growth for instance, as having a cultural character that makes them marketable in order that their value in global circuits of capital is enhanced. This Chinese character marks both a way to development for other countries which are ranked lower in the tables and makes it something exclusive which only the Chinese possess (Ramo, 2004).

Yet, alongside this differentiation of nations is a process of increasing economic relationships between nations. For instance, the Indian success story is often attributed to the adoption of a range of pro-market strategies such as liberalization of regulatory frameworks, enabling foreign direct investment and altering exchange rate policies (Srinivasan & Tendulkar, 2003). These involved a turn away from the Nehruvian policies adopted after Independence in 1947 and continued in some form since then. These Nehruvian policies were influenced by socialist principles and aimed to gain India economic independence through import substitution industrialization policies, i.e. they were based on the ethos of nation-building with the boundaries of the nation held close as the framework for economic policies. Although these stories are contested, with others emphasizing the significance of the economic substrate provided by an earlier period where the state played an important role in import substitution industrialization policies and in investment in capital goods (Nayyar, 2006), what is clear is that contemporary economies can rarely be straightforwardly demarcated as 'national', and therefore, marketable as having an 'Indian' or 'Chinese' character. Their spatialities are displaced from the nation in important ways because they are produced through a web of connections. The loose collectivities which go beyond the national (for example, global plutocracy, Pieterse, 2011; or global cities, Roy, 2011) are central to producing Rising Asia.

Postcolonial theory has the potential to offer new ways of thinking of these relationships in the context of Rising Asia. As Kaur and Wahlberg (2012) point out, comparison is the key mode of analysis in economic readings of Rising Asia. However, from postcolonial thinking we know that these relationships can also be seen as constitutive in known and unknown ways. For instance, the new growth in Rising Asia has primarily been seen as an urban phenomenon; rural areas have lost out (Krishna & Shariff, 2011). However, the role of rural areas in constituting these urban ways of life in myriad ways is less recognized. Equally, the use of capitalist investment as a mode of resolving spatial inequities, as Lim (2013) argues has been adopted in China, means that the relationships between places are varied; they are not merely antagonistic. Collectivities may also emerge across classes in creative ways, and between the rural and urban, for instance. Exploration of these types of (known and unknown) relationships is critical if the analysis of Rising Asia is not to stay as a binary conversation between hopefulness (often led by certain economists) and hopelessness (sociologically driven).

Both the rising nations of China and India and these collectivities (although this has received less attention) also reset the *field of postcolonial geography*. The role of such nations in the global South raises questions about dominant binary imaginaries such as North-South, developed-developing etc., overturning the spatial imaginaries of 'development' and of postcolonial theory (Raghuram, 2012). The economic and political rise of China in particular, has been accompanied by anxiety that centre and margin are exchanging places. Titles of volumes such as Martin Jacques's *When China Rules the World: the End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order* (2009; also see Gaens *et al.*, 2012) are illustrative of this anxiety.

For example, some advocate a continued push by China towards regional/global hegemony, either through military force or through the cultural power of Confucianism (Callahan, 2012). Callahan (2012: 39) notes that this kind of 'new orientalism' is often underpinned by forms of racialized supremacism, maintaining neo-colonial patterns of global power, but where the countries simply exchange their roles (centre/periphery). These challenges to the spatial imaginaries of postcolonial geography are particularly acute given the extent to which the Asian experience of colonialism (Chatterjee, 2012) and marginalization has underpinned postcolonial theory.

A grounded example of a possible reversal of centre and periphery is offered through the example of land acquisition, or what has come to be known as land grab. The acquisition of territory was one of the most significant aspects of colonialism. Today the grab for land is back in the news but the nature of this acquisition and some of those involved have changed. According to a study by the World Watch Institute, India, Brazil and China are among the top 10 countries investing in land in other countries (Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012). However, India is also among the top 10 countries where land has been acquired by foreign investors – up to 4.3 million ha (*The Times of India*, 2012).

Such issues of changing centres and peripheries also alter the relationalities that are usually seen as central to postcolonial geography. The range of dominant binaries in development and postcolonial thinking – North/South, elite/poor, First World/Third World, core/periphery – may not only be reversed, they may also be reformatted, with for instance, more emphasis on theorizations of the middle (Raghuram, 2012). The middle might be animated by viewing China not as the new centre, but as the conduit for US-led globalism to influence Africa. Or Rising Asia might be seen as a harbinger of a more multipolar world, unsettling binary thinking in more fundamental ways (Pieterse, 2011). The vectors of this multipolarity could be wide-ranging including class-based alliances (transnational precariat, Fraser, 2010), cultural formations (alternative modernities, Gaonkar, 2001) or cultural-epistemological thinking (border thinking, Mignolo, 2011). Thinking through the middle or beyond binaries could alter the relationalities common in postcolonial geography. In this context it may be questioned as to how far an analysis freighted with the particularities of spaces and relationships from European colonialism (Europe as colonizer/Asia as colonized) that have influenced postcolonial geography, still retains relevance and vibrant explanatory power?

Here, we would argue that postcolonial geography as a field will morph and change to accommodate the changes currently occurring in Asia, which is itself the field of much postcolonial thinking. Towards this, postcolonial geography may well borrow from other disciplines through creative and dynamic transference from discipline to discipline. Yet, this transference will have its limits; we must not be wooed unduly. The questions asked may also have to be repeatedly recast, not just tweaked. Asking new questions will make space for the

as-yet unknown. This type of deep questioning and requestioning, which is at the heart of postcolonial theory (and which we draw on for our version of postcolonial geography), means that in turn postcolonial geography may (still) have purchase in inflecting and influencing what is considered the 'field' of study of Rising Asia. This field will also ultimately be influenced by the constituency of Rising Asia (and postcolonial thinking).

Constituency

The *constituency that Rising Asia summons* is altering due to the changing political theatres and participants in an agentic civil society. This can be noted in the range of popular movements and political communities with more or less (and not making claims to the same) shared experiences (Chang, 2012). This raises questions such as what kinds of altered class alliances are being made possible through this phase of globalization and how do they differ from those of the colonial period? What decolonial options exist for rethinking cartographic ontologies and the geopolitics of knowledge?

For instance, processes of land acquisition are producing new spaces of collaboration between investment capital in India and other countries which sometimes build on the presence of Indians and Chinese already located in parts of the world owing to colonial and postcolonial mobilities. Land grab also highlights new spaces of alignment between the dispossessed. For example, in 2011 farmers from over 30 countries came together in Mali to produce a declaration demanding the right to protect their land from acquisition. How might these alliances of the dispossessed displace or relocate the contemporary spaces of resistance and resilience?

There is, therefore, no preformed *constituency for studying Rising Asia*. What Rising Asia suggests is that it can no longer (if it could ever) be assumed that it is the western academy (and its outliers in other global centres of education) that has to make space for others to be heard. The metaphor of space clearing (Appiah, 1991) which implicitly posits a western centre of knowledge may need revisiting if the conversations are actually happening elsewhere. The intellectual collectivity around Rising Asia might be much more diffuse and varied. It is difficult then to make sense of the dialogue that must be had with a future constituency which cannot be known in advance. However, in shaping an agenda for postcolonial geography it is not only those who are within the academy who should be heard. Academics should not drown out those who are speaking but whose voices we cannot yet hear. This is a familiar refrain in postcolonial geography (Jazeel, 2007; Jazeel & MacFarlane, 2010).

The spatial attachments of the constituency that debates questions of Rising Asia cannot be assumed to be Asians (academics and non-academics) alone. Given the displacements in space and the new alliances that are forming, the question of Asia is not limited to, or to be determined by, those who are part of Rising Asia. The constituency who can speak about Asia is influenced by the range of connections between Asia and many other parts of the globe,

including (but not only) through the challenges of transnationalist practices of people, capital and institutions etc. For example, the native informant may no longer be an Asian residing in Asia. Moreover, questions of Orientalism, which are the hallmark of geographical takes on postcolonial theory, will need revisiting if the Orient is seen as a powerhouse and European empires are decentred as the primary basis of postcolonial thinking. This is not to deny that Orientalism continues to seep into many of the debates around Rising Asia such as, for instance, in debates around the environmental effects of Chinese development, or (differently) on Chinese investments in Africa – after all, the location and the interests of commentators on China will influence these perspectives as much as the investments themselves. It is only to recognize that it takes more or less new forms and perhaps has different constituencies when played out in the contemporary moment. Thus, if Orientalism raised questions about the power of representation, as global power is (arguably) being rebalanced, one might ask what is the constituency (and not only the content) of debates around Orientalism? How is Orientalism (re)surfacing and how is it being authored and authorized?

Finally, we may want to ask what animates the constituency of those interested in understanding Rising Asia; how has this constituency formed and what kinds of relationships do they have to Rising Asia? Partha Chatterjee (2012) carefully sets out why those in the subaltern studies groups researched particular topics. This close attention to interests and investments and how they produced the body of work that has come to be known as ‘subaltern theory’ is telling. It reminds us of the need to think through not only who studies the problem of Asia but also the necessity for a clear exposition of why they may choose to do so (Raghuram & Madge, 2006). Who is it suggestive to and who has what invested in it? The construction of knowledge and of disciplinary formations was one of postcolonial theory’s great insights and is arguably one of its most influential contributions to geography. Here the theory makes a claim on the analysts, requiring them to think through and reflect upon what their object of study demands from them. This is a personal demand, not only a disciplinary one.

The constituency will be (and must be) produced around the problem that is being researched. But this collectivity is not just academic; Rising Asia calls a wider and diverse audience including a global elite but also those whose land has been grabbed, those who may or may not think collectively. The collectivity which thus forms around Rising Asia may be loose, dispersed and hard to define; what connects (or divides) them will be difficult to predetermine. Making sense of Rising Asia may then be post hoc work (Spivak, 1994) and it will call forth complex temporalities, as discussed below.

Temporalities

Both Rising Asia and postcolonial geography *demand an analysis of temporality*, as is clear from the terminology. Tensions between old and new, beginning and late, that postcolonial theory can hold together may be especially generative in thinking about Rising Asia, where the

newness of the phenomena is always under question. This section explores these issues of temporality.

The discourse of Rising Asia is replete with tension between the old and the new, and usually involves a call to see the phenomena as either radically new or just old, albeit with changes (Raghuram, 2012). For instance, the rise of China may be seen through the lens of continuity – as a reverting to, or at least based on, the millennia or more of economic and political power of various Chinese empires (Kang, 2007). Equally, it could be seen as US imperialism recast with a new set of actors (Amin, 2007). On the other hand, others would argue that Rising China is a new phenomenon albeit one based on adaptation of global capitalism (Ramo, 2004) or of a new socialist alternative (Arrighi, 2007). The nature of these debates depend on how they are staged – the kind of power being discussed (economic or political), the disciplines in which they are embedded and the specific issues (energy, aid, infrastructure development etc.) being considered.

This issue of continuity and change from the colonial period to the present is again evident in the case of land grab. A significant proportion of land acquisitions have occurred between countries of the global South and increasingly by regional powers, but the largest investors still remain countries of the global North – the US, UK and Australia. However, although huge swathes of land are being acquired, they are not usually being administered by colonial states. Instead, individuals and companies buy land on behalf of investors. Contemporary acquisition also differs from postcolonial forms of land redistribution, such as that triggered by ujamaa in Tanzania. As such, the role of government and capital in land acquisition, and of the ethos behind it, has altered since colonial times and the recent postcolonial past. Yet, the tensions of land acquisition also often draw on old hierarchies of class and gender such as who owns the land, what that ownership means with regard to exclusivity of use or rights to the commons. Thus, threaded through the analysis of land grab is an odd mixture of newness and repetition. In this context, although Rising Asia initially appears emblematic of an epochal shift from the twentieth century (as the postcolonial century in which many of the world's countries gained independence) to a new century (Pieterse, 2011), a 'post-postcolonial' era perhaps, in which European colonialism and its legacies need to be understood in longer historical perspective and in terms of very different spaces and relationships (O'Connor, 2003), land grab suggests that the shift might not quite be so epochal.

The question is, how do we deal with the complex and interwoven nature of the tensions between past, present and future in understanding Rising Asia? For Stoler (2011), there is no shortcut to this. Rather, detailed analysis of colonial pasts will reveal when and how 'colonial "common sense," colonial racial epistemologies, and the psychic structures of power' (2011: 156) come alive, albeit in uneven ways. Thus we need to ask not only how the narratives of 'rising' draw on older notions around Asia and Orientalism but also what the newer elements of these narratives (which hold no continuities with the old ones) might be. Nor, indeed, are

emergence and the story of newness always justified. Although this search for newness reminds us of the desire for new beginnings at the moment of independence, it is easy for this move to become celebratory without recognising how the weight of the past may well continue. Rather, attentiveness to the present will alert us to when the past no longer matters, or at least matters differently.

Discussions of Rising Asia, where ‘the future lies’, are often counterposed to, and underlain by, anxieties about the ‘death’ or at least receding European power (Jacques, 2009; Gaens *et al.*, 2012). However, such discussions both seem premature and inappropriate because how, when and where the racialized narratives, understandings and effects of colonialism in Asia come alive cannot be known in advance. We therefore need to keep in tension the hopefulness of being able to generate a future alongside a critique of ongoing, if mutating, power.

The story of empires rising and falling, of beginnings and endings is also always about a process of authorization from one world formation to the other. It requires the authority of the present to know the past and offer a future – to decide and outline what kinds of change we can recognize and ‘name’. This is often done through periodizations, which are inherent in both Rising Asia and postcolonial theory. Yet, periodization is itself a way of presenting very particular spatial and temporal experiences. For example, in an engagement between postcolonial theory and medieval studies, Holsinger (2008) argues that the notion of the medieval does not translate through global history – it is a western inheritance. However, this canvas of the medieval, seen as a period of backwardness in European history, a backdrop against which the progress of the renaissance can be placed, can be extended to analyse the colonies and its subjects to reveal how it was in fact formative of colonial identities (Davis & Altschul, 2009). The medieval also served as a provocation for change by anti-colonialists who argued that throwing off imperial powers would enable the colonies to join the modern. However, the medieval is neither coeval nor equivalent in other parts of the globe. Similarly, neither is the postcolonial or the Rising because the modern is not temporally or spatially fixed.

This question of periodization leads us to ask what other analytics are available to us to understand the modern, particularly now, when the new terms such as ‘emerging’ and ‘rising’ (powers), which are steeped in modernity, have become so compelling. What difference would it make if we were to analyse Rising Asia not through the history of neoliberalism in the last two decades as some have done (Srinivasan & Tendulkar, 2003), or indeed through the history of colonialism (Ludden, 2012), but through the inheritances of ways of life and subaltern practices that have long and complex roots/routes and which challenge imperial and post-imperial modernity? For example, in India the economic changes heralded in 1991 are often seen as a watershed which led to rising growth rates but as Tirthakar Roy (2002) suggests, these policies can also be analysed as a return to Victorian free market policies in the country. What kinds of comparators exist for looking beyond the modern, which are not simply celebratory of some

homogenized past? The tensions between past and present should not be seen as an opportunity to revert to a historicism which celebrates Indian or Chinese civilizations, portraying the European period as merely a blip.

Moreover, the periodization of postcolonial theory is also worth reflecting on. For medieval historians such as Catherine Brown (2000), postcolonial theory, like much contemporary theory, is itself of and from the modern. It cannot be carried over and used to understand the medieval without imposing the frameworks of modernity. Or rather, she questions to what extent, in using postcolonial theory, are we wedded to modern theoretical formations? This raises the question of periodization, not only of objects and events but also of theories and understandings, including that of the postcolonial. In using postcolonial theory we have to ask questions of our complicity to certain kinds of periodized knowledges. As Brown argues, the task of theory is not to be brought forward and be applied to new countries, places and times – '(s)uch a gesture rings uncannily with the modernizing mission of colonialism' (2000: 550). In the same vein, postcolonial theory's task too cannot simply be to extend itself into the future. These tensions between the past, present and future of both Rising Asia and of postcolonial theory suggest some cautions in advancing theorizations of Rising Asia.

Conclusions

There are many competing claims and voices from various subdisciplines surrounding the 'future' of postcolonial studies, ranging from those claiming 'the irrelevance' of postcolonial studies to others heralding its reorientation and reinvigoration for 'new times'. In this paper we have attempted to contribute to this debate through a consideration of 'the postcolonial' in contemporary geography. We have argued that Rising Asia presents a particular challenge for postcolonial geography, because it requires recognition of altered spatial imaginaries, shifting relationalities, changing collectivities and temporal tensions. But we have shown that Rising Asia is also reiteratively challenged by our indeterminate reading of postcolonial geography, for example through (1) deep questioning and requestioning of the field of Rising Asia, (2) recognizing that the constituency that forms around Rising Asia may be loose, dispersed, hard to define and difficult to predetermine, and that (3) it will involve recognition of complicities to certain kinds of periodized knowledges. These move us towards suggesting some cautions in 'advancing' theorizations of Rising Asia and in simply predicting 'the future' of postcolonial geography.

The paper also uncovers the continuing productive intellectual currency that can be generated by thinking about Rising Asia (and postcolonial geography more generally) through an engagement with some of the less well-rehearsed elements of postcolonial theory, in this case Said's (1975; 2007) work. In line with Said's arguments which highlight the indeterminacy of disciplines and question the stability of the future, the (im)possibility of future predictions and even a temporal frame that assumes a linear frame of past, present and future, we too do

not wish to define a 'future' for postcolonial geography. Rather we stress the regionally and socially specific nature of these types of cosmologies. As Stam and Shohat (2012) suggest, postcolonial theory has (always had) multiple beginnings, locations and trajectories and it is this temporally attuned, spatially attentive approach to thinking through postcolonial futures that we have sought to extend to our object of analysis in this paper – Rising Asia. As such, rather than set an agenda for research on Rising Asia, we finish with two issues that emerge from our analysis.

First, it is clear that it is not just the 'Rising' countries that are of interest but also how far they can act as a model for other countries (Kaplinsky & Messner, 2008). To what extent are such countries 'a trace of things to happen' (cf. Comaroff & Comaroff, 2012) – not simply 'recipients' of history but actually crucially important in making contemporary global futures in which Euro/America is playing 'catch up'? Secondly, postcolonial writing reminds us about the complex entanglements between power and knowledge creation. In writing about Rising Asia then how do we cultivate a careful attentiveness to the multiplicity of constituencies and collectivities around Rising Asia? And how do we recognize when to start again and again, in order to take on board these voices when analysing the future of postcolonial geography and/in Rising Asia?

References

Adam I, Tiffin H (1990) *Past the Last Post: Theorizing Post-colonialism and Post-modernism*. University of Calgary Press, Calgary.

Alina S (2012) The post always rings twice? The Algerian war, postcolonialism and poststructuralism in IR theory. *Review of International Studies* 38(1), 141–63.

Amin S (2007) Interviewed by Amady Aly Dieng. *Development and Change* 38 (6), 1149–59.

Anseeuw W, Boche M, Breu T, Giger M, Lay J, Messerli P, Nolte K (2012) Transnational Land Deals for Agriculture in the Global South. Analytical Report based on the Land Matrix Database. CDE/CIRAD/GIGA, Bern/Montpellier/Hamburg.

Appiah KA (1991) Is the post- in postmodernism the post- in postcolonial? *Critical Inquiry* 17(2), 336–57.

Arrighi G (2007) *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century*. Verso, London.

Basrur A (2010) Global quest and regional reversal. *International Studies* 47(2-4), 267–84.

Bayart JF (2011) Postcolonial studies: a political invention of tradition? *Public Culture* 23(1), 55–84.

Blunt A, McEwan C (2002) *Postcolonial Geographies*. Continuum, London.

Brown C (2000) In the middle. *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30(3), 547–74.

Callahan W (2012) Sino-speak: Chinese exceptionalism and the politics of history. *Journal of Asian Studies* 71(1), 31–55.

Chakrabarty D (2012) Postcolonial studies and the challenge of climate change. *New Literary History* 43(1) 1–18.

Chang D (2012) The neoliberal rise of East Asia and social movements of labour: four moments and a challenge. *Interface: a journal for and about social movements* 4(2), 22–51.

Chatterjee P (2012) After subaltern studies. *Economic and Political Weekly* xlvii 35, 44–49.

Chibber V (2013) *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital*. Verso, London.

Comaroff J, Comaroff J (2012) *Theory from the South, or, how Euro-America is Evolving toward Africa*. Paradigm Books, London.

Das G (2006) The India model. *Foreign Affairs* 85(4), 2–16.

Davis K, Altschul N (eds) (2009) *Medievalisms in the Postcolonial World: The Idea of 'The Middle Ages' Outside Europe*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

Dirlik A (1994) The postcolonial aura: Third World criticism in the age of global capitalism. *Critical Inquiry* 20(2), 328–56

European Commission (2009) *The World in 2025: Rising Asia and Socio-Ecological Transition*. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Fanon F (2001) *The Wretched of the Earth*. Penguin, London.

Florini A (2011) Rising Asian powers and changing global governance. *International Studies Review* 13(1), 21–33.

Fraser N (2010) Injustice at intersecting scales: on 'social exclusion' and the 'global poor'. *European Journal of Social Theory* 13(3), 363–71.

Gaens B, Jokela J, Mattlin M (2012) The EU's Asia: renegotiating boundaries, renegotiating norms. *Asia European Journal* 10, (2), 91–97.

Gaonkar D (2001) *Alternative Modernities*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Gilmartin M, Berg L (2007) Locating postcolonialism. *Area* 39(1), 120–24.

Hall S (1996) When was the "post-colonial"? Thinking at the limit. In Curti L, Chambers I (eds) *The Post-Colonial Question*, 242–60. Routledge, London.

Holsinger B (2008) Empire, apocalypse, and the 9/11 premodern. *Critical Inquiry* 34(3), 468–90.

Isin E (ed) (2012) Citizenship after Orientalism: an unfinished project. *Citizenship Studies* 16 (4–6), 563–849.

Jacques M (2009) *When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order*. Penguin, London.

Jazeel T (2007) Awkward geographies: spatializing academic responsibility, encountering Sri Lanka. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 28(3), 287–99.

Jazeel T, McFarlane C (2010) The limits of responsibility: a postcolonial politics of academic knowledge production. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35(1), 109–24.

Kang D (2007) *China Rising: Peace, Power and Order in East Asia*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Kaplinsky R, Messner D (2008) Introduction: the impact of Asian drivers on the developing world. *World Development* 36(2), 197–209.

Kaur R, Wahlberg A (2012) Governing difference in India and China: an introduction. *Third World Quarterly* 33(4), 573–80.

Kothari U (2002) Feminist and postcolonial challenges to development. In Kothari U, Minogue M (eds) *Development Theory and Practice: Critical Perspectives*, 35–51. Palgrave, Basingstoke.

Korhonen P (2008) Common culture: Asia rhetoric in the beginning of the 20th century. *InterAsia Cultural Studies* 9 (3), 395–417.

Korhonen P (2012) The Changing definitions of Asia. *Asia Europe Journal* 10(2-3), 99–112.

Krishna A, Shariff A (2011) The irrelevance of national strategies? Rural poverty dynamics in states and regions of India, 1993–2005. *World Development* 39(4), 533–49.

Lim KF (2013) ‘Socialism with Chinese characteristics’: uneven development, variegated neoliberalization and the dialectical differentiation of state spatiality. *Progress in Human Geography*.

Ludden D (2012) Imperial modernity: history and global inequality in Asia. *Third World Quarterly* 33, 581–601.

Mbembe A (2011) Provincializing France? *Public Culture* 23 (1), 85–119.

Mignolo W (2011) Geopolitics of sensing and knowing: on (de)coloniality, border thinking and epistemic disobedience *Postcolonial Studies* 14(3), 273–83.

Mohan G, Power M (2009) Africa, China and the 'new' economic geography of development. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 30 (1), 24–28.

Nayyar D (2006) Economic growth in Independent India: lumbering elephant or running tiger? *Economic and Political Weekly* 41 (15), 15 April.

Ning W (2005) Postcolonial theory and the 'decolonization' of Chinese culture. In McCallum P, Faith W (eds), *Linked Histories: Postcolonial Studies in a Globalized World*, 231–45. University of Calgary Press, Calgary.

O'Connor E (2003) Preface for a Post-Postcolonial Criticism. *Victorian Studies* 45(2), 217–46.

Pieterse J (2011) Global rebalancing: crisis and the East-South turn. *Development and Change* 42(1), 22–48.

Quayson A (2012) The sighs of history: postcolonial debris and the question of (literary) history. *New Literary History* 43(2), 359–70.

Radcliffe S (2005) Development and geography: towards a postcolonial development geography. *Progress in Human Geography* 29(3), 291–98.

Raghuram P (2012) *The Spaces of Migration and Development: a Journey*. Universiteit Utrecht, Utrecht.

Raghuram P, Madge C (2006) Towards a method for postcolonial development geography: possibilities and challenges. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 27(3), 270–88.

Ramo JC (2004) *The Beijing Consensus: Notes on the New Physics of Chinese Power*. Foreign Policy Centre, London. Available at: <http://www.fpc.org.uk> (23 September 2012).

Rigg J (2002) Of miracles and crises: (re-)interpretations of growth and decline in East and Southeast Asia. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 43(2), 137–56.

- Robinson J (2003) Postcolonialising Geography: tactics and pitfalls. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 24(3), 273–89.
- Robinson J (2011) Comparisons: colonial or cosmopolitan. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 32(2), 125–40.
- Roy A (2011) Slumdog cities: rethinking subaltern urbanism. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35(2), 223–38.
- Roy T (2002) Economic history and modern India: redefining the link. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 16(3), 109–30.
- Said E (1975) *Beginnings: Intention and Method*. Granta, London.
- Said E (1978) *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. Vintage, London
- Said E (2007) *On Late Style: Music and Literature against the Grain*. Bloomsbury, London.
- Seth S (2011) After Europe: an introduction. *Postcolonial Studies* 14(2), 129–33.
- Sharp J, Briggs J (2006) Postcolonialism and development: new dialogues? *The Geographical Journal* 172(1), 6–9.
- Sharp J (2009) *Geographies of Postcolonialism: Spaces of Power and Representation*. Sage, London.
- Shohat E (1992) Notes on the “Post-Colonial”. *Social Text* 31/32(issue number), 99–113.
- Sidaway J, Bunnell T, Yeoh B (2003) Geography and Postcolonialism. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 24(3), 269–72.
- Sidaway JD (2000) Postcolonial geographies: an exploratory essay. *Progress in Human Geography* 24(4), 591–612.
- Sidaway JD (2012) Geographies of development: new maps, new visions. *The Professional Geographer* 64(1), 49–62.

Slater D (2004) *Geopolitics and the Post-colonial: Rethinking North-South Relations*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Spivak G (1994) Responsibility. *Boundary 2* 21(3), 19–64.

Spivak G (1999) *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Harvard University Press, Harvard.

Spivak G (2003) *Death of a Discipline*. Columbia University Press, New York.

Srinivasan T, Tendulkar S (2003) *Reintegrating India with the World Economy*. Institute for International Economics, Washington DC.

Stam R, Shohat E (2012) Whence and whither postcolonial theory? *New Literary History* 43(2), 371–90.

Stoler A (2011) Colonial aphasia: race and disabled histories in France. *Public Culture* 23(1) 121–56.

The Times of India (2012) India among top 10 land grabbers, sellers. 27 June.

Stephen M (2012) Rising regional powers and international institutions: the foreign policy orientations of India, Brazil and South Africa. *Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations* 26(3), 289–309.

Tellis A, Tanner T, Keough J (eds) (2011) *Strategic Asia 2011–2012. Asia responds to its Rising Powers, China and India*. National Bureau of Asian Research, Washington.

UNDP (2013) *Human Development Report*. UNDP, New York. Available at: http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2013_EN_complete.pdf (accessed 12 June 2013).

Wang Y (2008) Public diplomacy and the rise of Chinese soft power. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(1), 257–73.

World Bank (1993) *The East Asian Miracle: Economic Growth and Public Policy*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

World Bank (2011) *Global Development Horizons*. World Bank, Washington DC.

Young R (2012) Postcolonial remains. *New Literary History* 43(2), 19–42.

¹ Although the paper is about Rising Asia, due to reasons of space it primarily uses Indian and Chinese examples to further the argument. The similarities and differences between how India and China are treated in the large Rising Asia literature cannot be accommodated here. We also did not have the space to develop the argument around the use of Asia as a ‘rhetorical commonplace’ (Korhonen, 2012: 110).